

Following Thursday's Hearing in the House Judiciary Committee, Gutierrez Sent the Following Letter to Comcast & NBC Executives, Highlighting and Clarifying Concerns over Portrayals of Women on Telemundo Programming and the Lack of Resources Provided to Local News.

February 26, 2010

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Jeff Zucker President and Chief Executive Officer, NBC Universal

David L.Cohen Executive Vice President, Comcast

Dear Mr. Zucker and Mr. Cohen:

Thank you for publicly responding to my concerns during the Judiciary Committee hearing on Thursday, February 25th. I would like to take this opportunity to reiterate and clarify the issues and concerns that I brought to your attention during the hearing and discussed with your executives in a meeting on Wednesday, February 24th.

I strongly believe that the news plays a pivotal role in educating, shaping and enabling the success of our communities. By informing and engaging, the news empowers us as voters and consumers, as mothers and fathers, as teachers and students. It brings much-needed attention

to our concerns, struggles and victories, further strengthening and unifying us.

Unfortunately, I was, and continue to be, deeply disappointed in the lack of resources committed to the Telemundo news program. As I expressed to your executives, and have stated many times in the past, when NBC purchased Telemundo there seemed to be a lack of investment and concern for providing what is a vital service to the Hispanic community in Chicago.

In the city of Chicago, NBC is largely perceived as being disinterested in ensuring that its news program can compete. Your news staff in Chicago is highly talented and professional and they should be measured on that standard, not undervalued because of their national origins. If NBC invested in the local Telemundo network, even a portion of the resources that it invests in the NBC news program, I would be assured that the gifted reporters, cameramen, producers, editors and hardworking staff at every level of Telemundo could strongly compete.

I would also like to convey that my comments at the Judiciary hearing were unprepared and, therefore, perhaps not as clear as they could have been. In fairness, I should have more clearly alluded to, and made exception for, the excellence and professionalism demonstrated by the women at Telemundo. They demonstrate the standard by which all women in the media should be measured. I apologize for this serious oversight.

My comments regarding the portrayal of women on Telemundo were meant to apply to programming in general. In this regard, I do strongly stand by my sentiments that the exploitation of women through inappropriate sexual innuendo or negative character portrayals is unacceptable and only serves to further ingrain negative ideals and stereotypes. When I catch in a cab in Chicago I want my cab driver to tell me that he loves Telemundo because the content reflects the needs of the community and not because of the clothing of the women in its programming.

During the hearing on Thursday, a commitment was made to invest more resources into the news of Telemundo network, and I encourage you to do so as soon as possible. Our community and the talent at Telemundo deserve a news program that is financed and supported on the same level as NBC's news programming.

Sincerely,

Luis V. Gutierrez
Member of Congress